

CHRISTIAN SECRETARY.

Christian Secretary.

HARTFORD, FRIDAY, SEPT. 18.

Hartford Baptist Association.

The Fifty-seventh Anniversary of this body was held with the Baptist church in Tariffville, on the 9th and 10th inst. According to a vote of the preceding session, the first hour was spent in prayer. The introductory sermon was then preached by br. Raymond, from *Isaiah 60: 1*. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." After which the usual collection was taken for the Widow's Fund.

At the call of br. W. Bentley, the Association was organized by the choice of br. E. Cushman, Moderator, A. M. Smith, Clerk, and L. Lewis, Assistant, and J. W. Dimock, Treasurer.

Brothers G. Robins, D. Ives, and E. A. Parker, were chosen committee to take charge of the widow's fund. By a vote of the Association, the Constitution and Rules of Order were so amended that the officers hold their offices till others are appointed.

The letters from the churches, though measurably barren of notices of special awakening and large accessions, indicate steadfastness in doctrine, harmony in action, and fervent desires for the revival of religion among us.

Six churches formerly connected with this body, (viz.) 1st and 2d Colebrook, Cornwall, Norfolk, Torrington and Warren, have since the last meeting, an toe in forming the Litchfield Association.

The Circular Letter by br. Ives, upon the early religious culture of children, is an able and appropriate document, and well adapted to the present state of the churches.

Wednesday evening br. Gates preached from *John 3: 16*, and was followed with addresses by several of the brethren.

Thursday morning was principally occupied with the prayer and exhortation till 10 o'clock, when the closing sermon was preached by br. L. Lewis, from *Rom. 7: 13*.

The Moderator, after an affectionate address, commended the Association to God in prayer, and thus closed a very harmonious and pleasant session of the Hartford Baptist Association.

It is due to the members of the church in Tariffville to say, that the delegates were entertained by them with a truly Christian hospitality. May they find their reward in the abundant effusions of the Holy Spirit among them.

The next meeting of the Association, by the decision of the committee to whom it was referred, will be held with the Baptist church in Pleasant Valley, on the 2d Wednesday in September, 1847. Br. E. Savage is appointed preacher.—br. E. Cushman alternate.

John Foster.

The character of this individual is but little understood in this country, although just at this particular time his writings are attracting considerable attention from various quarters. Foster was a member of the Baptist communion, but his sentiments on many points were widely different from the denomination to which he belonged. He died some four or five years since and his Life and Correspondence have been recently published, and are now the subject of comment by the religious press, reviews, &c. Among all the notices that we have seen respecting him there is none more fair, liberal, and truthful than one from the *North British Review* copied into *Littell's Living Age* for September 12.

The first and most remarkable trait in Foster's character, which the writer in the *Review* brings out, is *individuality*. "Foster sits down," he says, "to print, to describe, to anatomize himself—his individual soul; yet he does not do this from egotism, or at the impulse of excessive self-esteem; far from it; but because as a meditative recluse, musing the world, he is glad always to run into an enclosure where none can follow or annoy him."

"What is the use or value of communication—says Foster, extending beyond actual communication—states, republics, kingdoms, empire?"

"How can we take interest enough in distant beings to be called universal, to feel anything?" Why did the Supreme Disposer not, in many beings in one world, under circumstances which necessarily make the strangers to one another?

"Views which strongly realize to the mind the vast multitude of mankind, tend to contract the benevolence. The mind seems to say, What can I do with all this crowd? I cannot keep them in my habitual view; I cannot extend my affections to a thousand millions of persons who know nothing, and care nothing about me or each other; I can do them no good, I can derive no good from them—they have all their concerns, and I have mine; if I were this moment annihilated, it would be all the same to them;—there is no connection, nor relation, nor sympathy, nor mutual interest between us; I cannot therefore care anything about them; my affections cannot reach beyond these four or five with whom my own personal interests are immediately connected."

"Feel this insuperable individuality. Something seems to say, Come, come away; I am but a gloomy ghost among the living and the happy.—There is no need of me; I shall never be loved as I wish to be loved, and as I could love. I will converse with my friends in solitude; then they seem to be without me. They do not need the few felicities I could impart; it is not generous to tax their sympathies with my sorrows; and these sorrows have an aspect on myself which no other person can see. I can never become deeply important to any one; and the unsuccessful effort to become so, costs too much in the painful sentiment which the affectionate attempt when they return mortified from the fervent attempt to give themselves to some heart which would welcome them with a pathetic warmth."

Foster remained single until he reached his thirty-seventh year, up to which period his seclusive habits appeared to grow stronger and stronger, and had it not been for the fact, that he then married a lady of a similar mind and disposition to his own he would undoubtedly have ended his days a solitary, melancholy recluse. Previous to his marriage he says, "The last six months I have lived a little way out of the town, in a house amidst the fields. However, I hardly ever go out, because I can see them so well through my window. I hardly ever what can be called take a walk, except merely in the garden adjoining the house." This individuality, this self-confinement, for the purpose of holding converse with his own thoughts, was a prominent cause, undoubtedly, of inducing Foster to embrace the peculiar views which appear in his writings. Had he mingled with society more, become more familiar with the ways of the world, and studied human nature from actual every day experience by mingling with society, he would have formed very different opinions no doubt upon those points on which he differed from his denomination. But

his peculiar habits and manner of thinking, led him to take a different view of some things than the scriptures carefully and prayerfully studied will warrant. Still he was an honest and accurate believer in many of the cardinal truths of revelation. In the language of the Reviewer, "Foster believed, as superior natures in an upper world believe; and on earth, doubted, just where they, in heaven, veil their faces with their wings."

After his marriage his feelings evidently underwent a social change and he occasionally spoke of the beauties of nature; of delightful walks, and the pleasure he derived from the society of his friends; but his peculiar habits of thinking never forsook him. Domestic afflictions, however, produced a powerful effect upon his mind, and led him into a train of speculative reflections. After the death of his wife he indulged himself in strains like the following:

"Can it be—it what is it—that what is it—that has to think of the other as in a perfectly different economy of existence?" Whether is she gone—in what manner does she consciously realize to herself the astonishing change—how does she look at herself as no longer inhabiting a mortal tabernacle—in what manner does she recollect her state as only a few weeks since—in what manner does she think, and feel, and act, and communicate with other spiritual beings—what manner of vision has she of God and the Saviour of the world—how does she review and estimate the course of discipline through which she had been prepared for the happy state where she finds herself—in what manner does she look back on death, which she has so recently passed through—and does she plainly understand the nature of a phenomenon so awfully mysterious to the view of mortals? How does she remember and feel respecting us, respecting me? Is she associated with the spirits of her departed son, and two children who died in infancy? Does she indulge with delight a confident anticipation that we shall, after a while, be added to her society? If she should think of it as, with respect to some of us, many years, possibly, before such an event, does that appear a long time in prospect, or has she begun to account of duration according to the great laws of eternity? Earnest imaginings and questions like these arise without end; and still, there is no answer, no revelation. The mind comes again and again up close to the thick black veil; but there is no performance, no glimpse. She that loved me, and I trust loves me still, will not, cannot, must not answer me. I can only imagine and say, "Come and see; serve our God so that you shall come and share, at no distant time."

We have neither time nor space to enter into a particular expose of Foster's views and feelings, the few brief extracts above will give the reader a pretty correct idea of the leading traits in his character. Had he attached more importance to the teachings of the Bible and less to his own judgment, it would have been better for him; but by permitting his capacious imagination to control his religious views he wandered from the narrow path of truth into the broad fields of doubt and error, yet such was his regard for the truth, and so strong the evidence in favor of the inspiration of the Bible, that he never abandoned a firm, general belief in the sacred scriptures. His reviewer well describes the religious course of Foster by the following comparsion.

"Nor was Foster's mood (if we are free to speak of it without reserve) that of more happily constituted Christian minds. Devout as he was, and eminently serious and energetic too, as to his settled belief—his morbid instinct, and his gloomy imagination, stood between him and that "light and peace" which, notwithstanding the state of the world, belongs to, and distinguishes, the genuine Christian temper. Paul, assuredly, was as much alive, as a good man ought to be, to the condition of his fellow-men; nor was he, either in the mystical, or in a secular sense, of an abstained and insensitive temper; and yet his epistles do not contain a line indicative of a mood of mind resembling Foster's. One feels, even when not able to detect the sophism precisely, that there is, and must be, a capital fallacy involved in his view of man, when there must be, for the whole tenor of the apostolic writings implies the very contrary to his conclusion."

If once permitted we could exemplify this discordance in several remarkable instances. A fellow traveller, sometimes, who has unluckily chance to get off the road, is seen making great strides in the right direction, but yet over ground so rugged and impracticable, that though he does keep abreast of the company, one expects to see him fall exhausted at every step. Such a feeling attends the perusal of Foster's letters."

It is not at all surprising that a mind constituted like Foster's should reject the plain Bible doctrine of the eternity of future punishment—the only wonder is that such a mind, allowed to wander and speculate in false theories like his, should even retain so large a share of truth as it actually did.—Foster never pretended that the Bible taught the doctrine of the final salvation of the whole world, but reasoning from what is termed the *moral argument* he rejected the doctrine of *endless punishment*. The Universalists have raised a shout of triumph over this, and used it to the best possible advantage for furthering the doctrine of Universalism. This is no more than we expected; and no more than a party which lacks scripture to prove its doctrines true, had a perfect right to do. But what does it prove? Not that the Bible teaches Universalism; certainly not; for the same truths remain in that book now that were found there before John Foster was born, and there they will remain, till he, together with the rest of mankind, shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. If the religious opinions of Foster prove anything, they only prove that human reason stronger and powerful it may be, but is a frail guide in matters pertaining to the salvation of the soul; and that our only safety is in a strict adherence to the plain and simple teachings of the gospel.

Advantages of Baptismal Regeneration.

"Take away the *Alter* from the Church, and you remove from Baptism and you reduce us to the absurdities of modern revivalism. Take away the Church's right to dogmatize—to be the interpreter of Holy Scripture—to be the authoritative teacher and guide of souls, and you let in the whole train of abominations that attend upon the Protestant notion of private judgment."

Our readers should suppose the above extract is from a Roman Catholic publication, we would inform them that it is copied, verbatim, from the last number of the *Calendar*, a weekly paper devoted to the interests of the *Protestant* Episcopal Church in Connecticut. Who the writer of the article is from which the quotation is made, we do not know; he signs himself "A Catholic," and for ought we know to the contrary, may be one of those "Jesuits in disguise" to whom allusion is made in his communication. But let him be who he may, he has frankly admitted a fact of some importance, which the editor has endorsed by admitting it to his editorial columns without note or comment. "Take away Regeneration from Baptism," he says, "and you reduce us to the absurdities of modern revivalism." The voriest noice in the Baptist church knows that Episcopacy, like Romanism, is dependent for its existence upon infant baptism; and hence

it is under the necessity of attributing to this ordinance some peculiar merit—something which shall supply the place of the gospel terms of admission to the church. Regeneration is just the thing, it being a very easy way of making church members.

The sprinkling of a few drops of water upon an infant's forehead by the priest, who afterwards thanks God that this child is regenerate," has been the means, no doubt, of quieting in after life, the consciences of thousands and of inducing them to live as Paul did up to the time of his conversion, "after the straitest sect a Pharisee." Take away this practice from the Protestant Episcopal church and it falls; or, in the words of the writer quoted above, they are "reduced to the absurdities of modern revivalism."

Here then, according to the showing of the Episcopal paper of Connecticut, is the *foundation* upon which their church rests; remove it, and nothing but genuine conversions to God, can furnish members for her communion; a method which is treated as an *abridgment* by the paper in question; but, absurd as it may be in their eyes, there is no alternative left after baptismal regeneration is removed. Had that dogma never been invented, the Papal church, and her legitimate daughters, could never have existed; for the church would have been under the necessity of relying upon the same means that modern revivalism does to fill her communion. It is this monster which makes the world the church and the church the world; that sustains all the religious establishments in Christendom; which in Germany and in other countries for aught we know, compels prostitutes to submit to confirmation before they can obtain licences to keep houses of ill-fame. It is this, and the assumed right of the church to dogmatize, that has led millions, we fear, to take up with a religion which fails to purify the heart and make men fit subjects for immortality and eternal life.

This great error, which had its origin, we doubt not, from beneath, must be eradicated before pure and undefiled religion can flourish as it did in the days of the apostles—for unconverted men now-a-days can wrap themselves in the mantle of baptismal regeneration and bid defiance to the threatenings of the Law, and to the appeals of the gospel to turn and live. The religious world, to a great extent, have been accustomed to look upon this ceremony as a *harmless* affair; but if it could be viewed in all its hideous aspects—if if the millions who have been deceived by it, and thereby led to trust in something short of a genuine, scriptural change of heart could be brought to view the subject in its true light, infant sprinkling and baptismal regeneration would cease to be acknowledged as a thing of divine authority.

We like frank, open-hearted men; and we thank the writer in the *Calendar*, who is one of this class, for his ingenuousness; we thank him for frankly admitting that one Puritanizer, in his opinion, is doing more to injure "the Church" than ten Romanizers; we thank him for declaring that the Protestant notion of private judgment is an abomination. We know where to find such men.

Peace.

Dr. Sharp, of Boston, who furnished the Christian Watchman with the following documents, expresses a hope that they will be copied into all other religious newspapers, and that the Address be read at the meetings of the respective Associations, and such order or resolutions taken upon it, as may in the estimation of pastors and delegates best promote and perpetuate universal peace. The subject of peace has not received that attention from our religious bodies which its vast importance demands.

Were an decided an expression of the churches obtained against war as there has already been against intemperance, it would produce a very beneficial effect on the cause of peace.

BRADFORD, Yorkshire, July 17, 1846.

MY DEAR BROTHER.—As one of the Secretaries of the West Riding Baptist Association, I am requested to forward the enclosed memorial to the Baptist churches of the United States; and I have great pleasure in committing it to your charge, requesting, as a favor, that you will lay it before your brethren at the earliest convenience.

Happily the "rumors of war" have died away since the memorial was unanimously adopted by the messengers and ministers of the two Associations, and in the presence of one or two thousand friends from Yorkshire and Lancashire.

The Baptists of this country feel that war between England and America would be an enormous crime in the sight of God, and a foul blot on our common Christianity. They are convinced, also, that the Christians of both countries can bring such an amount of moral influence to bear upon their respective governments as shall compel them to settle any differences that may arise hereafter by more rational instruments than the bayonet or the cannon. May the God of peace give us peace by all means, and through all future times!

Wishing you, my dear brother, the best of blessings, and continued success in your work,

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS POTTENGER.

Rev. Dr. Sharp, Boston.

To the *Baptist Church of the United States of America*, from the *West Riding of Yorkshire and Lancashire, and Cheshire Association of Baptist churches*, at their Annual Meeting held at Bradford, June 1st, 2d and 3d, 1846.

DEAR BRETHREN.—The rumors of war between England and America would be a terrible curse to the *Alter* from the Church, and you remove from Baptism and you reduce us to the absurdities of modern revivalism. Take away the Church's right to dogmatize—to be the interpreter of Holy Scripture—to be the authoritative teacher and guide of souls, and you let in the whole train of abominations that attend upon the Protestant notion of private judgment."

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From the New York Tribune.

American Board of Missions.

FIRST DAY.—Evening Session.—On Tuesday evening, the Annual Sermon was delivered by Rev. Dr. HAWES of Hartford. The speaker commenced by saying that the American Board was formed thirty-six years ago in the parlor of a clergyman of Connecticut, by five men, three from Massachusetts and two from Connecticut, one of whom still survives. He spoke of the difficulties they had to encounter, and the lack of means; and asked attention while he reviewed the past history of the Board. First: The enlargement of the field of Missions.—Once but few places were open for Missionary labor, and many of the Missions established by the London Society were nearly extinct; our own missionaries were driven away from Hindostan, &c. This was thirty years ago last February, but how changed! China, Hindostan, the Islands of the Pacific, Australasia, Africa, are open, and even Turkey has by a late decree of the Sultan been religiously revolutionized. There are now no less than 500,000,000 of souls accessible to us. The other points treated of in the discourse were the increase of Missionary spirit; the wise and able manner in which the affairs of the Board have been conducted; the success of able and faithful missionaries, &c.

SECOND DAY.—On Wednesday, letters were read from Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen, President of the Board, and from several of the Corporation Members, giving reasons for their non-attendance.

Reports of the condition of the Missions beyond the sea, and of the condition of the Mission among the Indians, and among the Chinese.

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satisfied those who are de-
ren abroad for education, will
that the department of Stew-
satisfactorily filled in the Conn.

and long experience, and intel-
acter and parental kindness
send, are the best pledges
their present responsible field of
A FATHER.

5. Brig. of War Truxton.

of Sept. 6, contains the par-
tus of the U. S. Brig of War,
of the entire crew, with

Lieutenants and nineteen

officers, and nineteen men, went

to shore in order to protect his

provisions, employed a Scotch

of a Mexican prize to pilot

the Scotchman was acquainted

is not known, but he succeeded

in the bar of Tuxpan river,

miles North of Vera Cruz.—

Truxton, the crew with the ex-
ceptives and nineteen men, went

themselves to the Mexican

were hospitably received, and

left the next day with a

or Tampico, about 100 miles

were about 60 of the offi-

cers. Those remaining on

boat and succeeded in cap-

ture, in which they sailed for

Antonias, which they reached

as soon as the news reached

the port left for the week, which on

and burnt, finding it impossible

to get into the port.

New Orleans Sept. 5th, brought

Kim, states that a fatal riot oc-

company of Irish volunteers and

night of the 31st, at an encamp-

Guns were fired, and 15 or

to have been killed or woun-

ded and wounded seen or

aid to have been pushed from

the shore) overboard, and the

rioters were finally subdued

and placed under a

order to a court martial. Col.

of volunteers, who undertook to

20 chosen men, was shot thro'

the ball passing out through

Capt. Roberts, of company

wound with a bayonet, which

soldier blade and passed through

expected to recover.

Enterprise burst her boiler and

of Aug., at a place 40 miles

five persons were killed instant-

aneously.

CITY.—This Society, now wor-

ship Hall, has purchased the house

corner of Main st. and Harri-

the purpose of erecting a new

The amount of purchase money

position is a good one for a

the Society may succeed in

provide a more central and

ship. The old church on Ma-

and sold for sale. Rev. Mr. Clark is

of the Society.—Springfield Rep-

ew Era of Aug. 31st, after mem-

of four slaves from that city,

every day slaves are leaving their

only preventive is to keep a strict

afforded here for their es-

to depreciate the value of this

they much.

in the State of Rhode Island

for the sale of intoxicating

and enforce the penalty of the laws

, and there now is—not that it will

drinkers from the use of spirits,

temptation from the path of thon-

en, many of whom might other-

wise.

—A Cincinnati correspondent

the Ninth street Baptist Church

to the Rev. E. M. Magoon, to

Mr. Magoon has also received

in Louisville. He preached in

September, and left for Louisi-

It was not known

he would accept.

of Richmond, has resigned the

Third Baptist church in that

of assuming the office of Cor-

of the Southern Baptist Con-

the Evangelist says that the mer-

and Co., of New York,

and twenty years generously give

many missionaries on board their

passage money of which, at the

would have amounted to about

dollars.

Evening Mail publishes a letter

of the diocese of Kerry to

Bishop of that diocese, asking

their children to the free

schools, but for some time past

required to take their little ones

telling them there is danger in

by sending them. The pell-

it very strange that the priests

had which they once thought

they had had their names cal-

at a Sunday after Sunday, and

to scorn and persecution, while

been the objects of insult and

approach the fatherly feel-

pray that their children may be

of learning to read, and be

something of the word of God,

in these days.

CHRONICLE.—Several numbers

have been received. It is a large,

and thus far very well conduct-

Baptists of Pennsylvania will

their own interests as to give to

the Water Cure.

THE LAST YANKEE ENTERPRISE.—Mr. B. F.

Bolles, of New London, is about to establish an

“express” to the Sandwich Islands! The

News says “A few months since the agents of the

whaling fleet, in the Pacific, found it desirable

to send a similar vessel to the

transmission of a letter there, cost eight to ten dol-

lars—Mr. Bolles’ charge will be at much less rate

for a letter, probably not to exceed one quarter that

charged by the former express, and all other packa-

ges entrusted to his care, will be taken proportion-

ately low.

The Carolina Baptist states as follows:—We have received by a private letter from our dear old father in Middle Tennessee, intelligence of revivals, in which 40, 55 and 50 persons professed Christ; and a very worthy Presbyterian minister of our acquaintance, Rev. C. Ferguson, was baptised.

HARTFORD AND NEW HAVEN RAILROAD CO.—The annual meeting of the stockholders of this company was held in this city on Wednesday, the 9th inst. From the Director’s Report it appears that the receipts of the road from Sept. 1, 1845, to Sept. 1, 1846, were,—

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| From passengers, | \$155,061 01 |
| “ freight, | 61,250 73 |
| “ mail and express, | 12,300 00 |

Total, \$288,611 74

Expenses of operating and maintaining the road, interest on bonds and loans 123,483 24

Net income for the year, \$165,128 50

Equal to 7 1/2 per cent. on the amount of stock issued.

The whole number of passengers transported between all the stations from Hartford to N. Haven during the year, amounts to one hundred ninety-six thousand two hundred and seventy-eight.

The Branch Road to the river is to be completed on the opening of navigation in the spring.

A resolution was passed unanimously, authorizing the Directors to relay the track between this city and New Haven with a T rail. A semi-annual dividend of 3 1/2 per cent. was declared.

THE WEATHER.—A correspondent of the Daily Courier who has kept an accurate journal of the weather by one of Pastorelli’s thermometers, says that the mean heat for the first eight days in September was 81 and 82-100 degrees, which is 64-100s of a degree greater each day in September than the eight successive days of warmest weather in July.

PEACHES IN NEW YORK AND LONDON.—We are informed that Peaches were sold in New York, Saturday, at 8 cents a basket. In July, 1843, we saw Peaches sold in London at ten shillings a piece. We dare not ask any body to believe this statement, as we are not upon the evidence which our eyes have seen.

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